

and enhance the services of the United States Postal Service, and for other purposes; as follows:

On page 61, line 18, strike "240 days" and insert "eight months".

AUTHORITY FOR COMMITTEES TO MEET

Mr. Kaine. Mr. President, I have 6 requests for committees to meet during today's session of the Senate. They have the approval of the Majority and Minority Leaders.

Pursuant to rule XXVI, paragraph 5(a), of the Standing Rules of the Senate, the following committees are authorized to meet during today's session of the Senate:

COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES

The Committee on Armed Services is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Tuesday, March 1, 2022, at 9:30 a.m., to conduct a hearing.

COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

The Committee on Finance is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Tuesday, March 1, 2022, at 10 a.m., to conduct a hearing on nominations.

COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND NATURAL RESOURCES

The Committee on Energy and Natural Resources is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Tuesday, March 1, 2022, at 10 a.m., to conduct a hearing.

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS

The Committee on Foreign Relations is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Tuesday, March 1, 2022, at 10 a.m., to conduct a classified briefing.

COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY

The Committee on the Judiciary is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Tuesday, March 1, 2022, at 10 a.m., to conduct a hearing.

COMMITTEE ON VETERANS' AFFAIRS

The Committee on Veterans' Affairs is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Tuesday, March 1, 2022, at 10 a.m., to conduct a joint hearing.

PRESIDENTIAL MESSAGE

REPORT ON THE STATE OF THE UNION DELIVERED TO A JOINT SESSION OF CONGRESS ON MARCH 1, 2022—PM 21

The PRESIDING OFFICER laid before the Senate the following message from the President of the United States which was ordered to lie on the table:

To the Congress of the United States:

Madam Speaker. Madam Vice President. Our First Lady and Second Gentleman. Members of Congress and the Cabinet. Justices of the Supreme Court. My fellow Americans.

Last year—COVID-19 kept us apart. This year—we are finally together

again. Tonight we meet as—Democrats—Republicans—and Independents. But most importantly—as Americans. With a duty to one another—to the American people, to the Constitution.

And with an unwavering resolve—that freedom will always triumph over tyranny.

Six days ago—Russia's Vladimir Putin sought to shake the foundations of the free world—thinking he could make it bend to his menacing ways. But he badly miscalculated. He thought he could roll into Ukraine—and the world would roll over.

Instead—he met a wall of strength he never imagined. He met the Ukrainian people. From President Zelenskyy to every Ukrainian—their fearlessness—their courage—their determination—inspires the world. Groups of citizens blocking tanks with their bodies. Everyone from students to retirees—teachers turned soldiers—defending their homeland.

In this struggle—as President Zelenskyy said in his speech to the European Parliament—"light will win over darkness."

The Ukrainian Ambassador to the United States is here tonight. Let each of us here tonight—in this Chamber—send an unmistakable signal to Ukraine and to the world.

Please rise if you are able—and show that—YES—WE the United States of America—stand with the Ukrainian people.

Throughout our history—we've learned this lesson—when dictators do not pay a price for their aggression—they cause more chaos. They keep moving. And the costs and the threats—to America and the world—keep rising.

That's why the NATO Alliance was created—to secure peace and stability in Europe after World War II. The United States is a member—along with 29 other nations. It matters. American diplomacy matters. American resolve matters.

Putin's latest attack on Ukraine was premeditated and unprovoked. He rejected repeated efforts at diplomacy. He thought the West—and NATO—wouldn't respond. And he thought he could divide us at home. Putin was WRONG. We were ready. Here is what we did.

We prepared—extensively and carefully. We spent months building a coalition of other freedom-loving nations from—Europe and the Americas—to Asia and Africa—to confront Putin.

I spent countless hours—unifying our European allies. We shared with the world—in advance—what we knew Putin was planning—and precisely how he would try to falsely justify his aggression. We countered Russia's lies with truth.

And now that he has acted—the free world is holding him accountable. Along with—27 members of the European Union—including France, Germany, Italy—as well as countries like—the United Kingdom—Canada—

Japan—Korea—Australia—New Zealand, and many others—EVEN Switzerland—we are inflicting pain on Russia and supporting the people of Ukraine.

Putin is now isolated from the world more than ever.

Together with our allies—we are RIGHT NOW—enforcing powerful economic sanctions. We are—cutting off Russia's largest banks from the international financial system. Preventing Russia's central bank from defending the Russian Ruble—making Putin's \$630 billion "war fund"—worthless. We are choking off Russia's access to technology that will sap its economic strength and weaken its military for years to come.

Tonight—I say to the Russian oligarchs and corrupt leaders—who have bilked billions of dollars off this violent regime—NO MORE.

The U.S. Department of Justice is assembling a dedicated task force to go after the crimes of Russian oligarchs.

We are joining with our European allies to—find and seize—your yachts—your luxury apartments—your private jets. We are coming for your ill-begotten gains.

And tonight—I am announcing that we will join our allies in closing off American air space to ALL Russian flights—further isolating Russia—and adding an additional squeeze—on their economy.

The Ruble has lost 30 percent of its value. The Russian stock market has lost 40 percent of its value and trading remains suspended.

Russia's economy is reeling—and Putin alone is to blame.

Together with our allies—we are providing support to the Ukrainians in their fight for freedom. Military assistance. Economic assistance. Humanitarian assistance. We are giving more than \$1 billion in direct assistance to Ukraine.

And we will continue to aid the Ukrainian people—as they defend their country and to help ease their suffering.

Let me be clear—our forces ARE NOT engaged and WILL NOT engage—in conflict with Russian forces in Ukraine.

Our forces are NOT going to Europe to fight in Ukraine—but to DEFEND our NATO Allies—in the event that Putin decides to keep moving west.

For that purpose—we've mobilized American—ground forces—air squadrons—and ship deployments to protect NATO countries—including—Poland—Romania—Latvia—Lithuania—and Estonia.

As I have made crystal clear—the United States and our Allies will defend every inch of territory of NATO countries—with the full force of our collective power.

And we remain clear-eyed. The Ukrainians are fighting back—with pure courage. But the next few—days—weeks—months—will be hard on them.

Putin has unleashed violence and chaos. But while he may make gains on